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W 66*University of California Publications in Am. Arch. and Ethn.*

276 importance. Eating peyote, praying, rubbing sage leaves on the body, fanning cedar
 755 smoke over the body, touching the ritual equipment to the body, being sprinkled
 *795 with "holy" water, and smoking special cigarettes are therapeutic practices in
 N nearly all peyote ceremonies.

W Although peyote is prayed to and eaten in privacy, it is primarily used cere-
 782 monially by a congregation of believers.

THE PEYOTE CERIMONY

*795 Periodically, usually Saturday nights, the peyotists assemble before a tipi or house
 796 which has been previously prepared for the ritual. The leader prays at the entrance;
 346 then all follow him into the meeting place, passing to the left of the altar, and pro-
 782 ceeding clockwise in a circle to places designated by the leader. (See fig. 1.)

796 The altar is a half-moon of sand or earth with a large peyote button placed on it,
 796 to which prayers are addressed during the night. Smoking especially prepared
 276 cigarettes, eating peyote, praying, and singing constitute the ceremony. The ritual
 paraphernalia consist of a cane, fan, drum, rattle, and whistle. All but the whistle
 are passed clockwise, and each man sings, then beats the drum for his neighbor.
 The ritual varies at midnight when water is blessed and passed around, and at
 dawn near the close when both water and food are brought, blessed, and eaten in
 turn by everyone.

009 The foregoing sketch of the history, general ideology, and typical ritual provides
 a basis for understanding the peyote cult of the western Great Basin.

LOCATION OF WASHO AND NORTHERN PAIUTE

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101 The Washo Indians, a small, isolated, Hokan-speaking group, occupied the extreme
 western edge of the Great Basin and the Sierra Nevada around Lake Tahoe. Wood-
 fords, Tallac, Truckee, and Loyalton, California, are in ancient Washo territory,
 as are Reno, Carson City, Minden, and Gardnerville, Nevada.*

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101 The Northern Paiute, a more numerous population, included in the Mono-
 Bannock subdivision of the Shoshonean subfamily, adjoined the Washo on the
 north, east, and south, possessing the western part of the Great Basin from east-
 central Oregon south to Owens Valley in California.* The Northern Paiute in-
 cluded in this study occupied the central and southern parts of the territory:
 Pyramid Lake, Walker Lake, and Fallon reservations; Smith and Mason valleys,
 Nevada; and in California, Mono and Inyo counties. (See map 1.)

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563 A few Shoshone from their territory east of the Northern Paiute and a few
 *795 Miwok from the west have moved into Northern Paiute lands and with the Paiute
 have embraced the peyote religion.

FIELD METHODS

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Ethnographers must usually content themselves with studying the Indian culture
 of the United States when its constituent traits exist only in the memories of the
 aged. Even in the investigation of contemporary institutions, such as the sun dance,
 the shaker cult, and the peyote cult, observations are usually made years after
 patterns have become established; by that time individuals and circumstances
 relative to their introduction are already partly forgotten. That five or six years

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* See Biskin, 1938; Lewis, 1939; and Stewart, 1939.

* See Stewart, 1939, and Stewart, 1933, for exact limits of Northern Paiute area. Peyotists, some-
 times used as synonymous to Northern Paiute, usually includes only those Paiute who live in the
 vicinity of Pyramid and Walker lakes, and will be used only when quoting other ethnographers.

[Text continues on p. 68]

Stewart: Washo-Northern Paiute Peyotism

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Ben himself drew my attention to two unorthodox particulars. First, he always places the ritual paraphernalia on the ground to his left (near the north end of the moon) with the tips of the feathers pointing north, "so they are always on their way around." The Ute alternate from left to right side according to a definite rule, which Ben considers wrong. A second peculiarity is the erection of a circular wall of canvas for meetings, instead of a tipi. Calling his method the "tipi way," Ben admits tipis are good for small crowds, but says they are inadequate for his meetings. It is possible this practice is partly conditioned by a similar method among the Cheyenne, familiar to Ben, or is adopted from the Paiute shaman's custom of doctoring in brush enclosures. However, convenience is surely the chief determinant, for Ben also holds rituals in houses, sheds, and brush and grass enclosures. "The use of parched corn . . . for the peyote breakfast may be regarded as universal for peyotism, wherever found," writes La Barre (p. 56). The Washo and Northern Paiute, however, use boiled rice. No explanation for the substitution is given. Since the Goshute sometimes use rice, Ben may have picked up the idea on his way to Nevada.

Although *Artemisia* is readily available in the Washo-Paiute area, it is not arranged for members to sit upon during meetings, as is done throughout the Plains. A few twigs, however, as elsewhere, are passed around at the start of meeting; and leaves are picked off, chewed, and rubbed over the body before the bundle is attached to the staff. Washo and Northern Paiute also have the hitherto unreported practice of mixing chopped "sage" leaves in their special prayer cigarettes. The local *Artemisia tridentata* is not used, a special "sage" being imported from Texas. Although no mention is made of it in the literature, Voegelin wrote me that this feature is present among the Absentee Shawnee; also Lone Bear and John Wright, peyotists well acquainted with Oklahoma ritual but who do not attend Ben's meetings, both prepared "sage" cigarettes to clear my throat while we were practicing peyote songs. As with the Ute, the Washo-Paiute peyotists use ordinary wheatstraw cigarette papers instead of the cornhusks characteristic of the Plains.

The Washo-Paiute peyote paraphernalia differ slightly from those reported as typical: the staff or cane is undecorated; two feathers are tied near the top of the cane with the *Artemisia* after midnight; small feathers sometimes replace the usual horsehair decoration on the distal ends of the gourd-rattle handle; nearly everyone has his own rattle; and the chief's fan is not passed with the staff until after midnight (the Ute, at least, pass it all night). The custom of passing the chief's staff and rattle around the circle after the formal ending of the ritual is, I think, also limited to the Washo-Paiute cult. Each member signals along the staff as it is passing, then presses it to parts of his body; finally, holding it in front of him, he gives four long shakes with the rattle. Since Washo-Paiute shamans tie two feathers to the stick used in curing, this may have prompted peyotists to do the same, although the same practice occurs among the Delaware (Petrullo, 51). On the other hand, since shamans sometimes touch their patients with a stick, it is likely that the Washo and Northern Paiute simply added the staff to the custom of touching the body with the drumstick, usual in Utah and Colorado. The drinking of the blackened water from the drum after the buckskin has been removed and touching the water to the body with the drumstick is also unusual.

In other respects, Ben and Sam seem less exacting than Ute "chiefs." The butts

* La Barre, 51.

* Schultes wrote me that he had never heard of the practice.

* At a meeting at Randlett, Utah, Ben persuaded the Ute to drink the water from the drum, but it was not done at other Ute peyote meetings that I attended.